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## BOROUGH OF DARTFORD.

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### *Annual Report for 1943 of the Medical Officer of Health.*

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PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT,  
DARTFORD.

17th July, 1944

TO THE MAYOR, ALDERMEN AND COUNCILLORS  
OF THE BOROUGH OF DARTFORD

SIR, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I beg to present my report as Medical Officer of Health for the year 1943.

As in the past years the report is, on the instructions of the Ministry of Health, presented in an abbreviated form and again this year, at the Minister's request, certain particulars regarding vital statistics have had to be omitted for reasons of national security.

All the usual particulars and statistics have been compiled and are kept for record purposes.

I am, Sir, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

THOMAS FARTHING,

*Medical Officer of Health.*

## GENERAL STATISTICS.

Area (acres) ... ..	4,234
Population (Census, 1931) ... ..	28,928
Number of inhabited houses (end of 1943) according to Rate Books	10,146
Rateable Value ... ..	£293,811
Sum represented by 1d. rate ... ..	£1,174

## SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE DISTRICT.

### *Water Supply.*

The district is supplied with water by the Metropolitan Water Board.

In addition to the tests carried out by the Board, periodical samples are taken by the Health Department and examined at the county laboratory. During the year all these samples were satisfactory.

### *Drainage and Sewerage.*

The district is main sewered, and the water carriage system is general. The sewage is dealt with by the West Kent Main Sewerage Board (of which the Dartford Corporation is a constituent Authority) at their works at Long Reach, Dartford.

There are only 94 houses not connected to the public sewers.

### *Rivers and Streams.*

Pollution of the Stanham Brook arising in an adjoining district has again had to be dealt with during the year.

## SANITARY INSPECTION OF DISTRICT.

This is dealt with in the Annual Report of the Sanitary Inspector which is appended hereto.

## HOUSING.

No new houses were built during the year and the shortage of working class houses and overcrowding has increased during the year.

The shortage of labour and the difficulties in obtaining materials for the repair of existing houses and the remedying of defects and nuisances has been increasingly difficult during the year.

## FOOD AND DRUGS ACT, 1938.

The Council are the Food and Drugs Authority under the above Act.

Mr. W. E. Balchin, the Chief Sanitary Inspector, is the Sampling Officer and particulars of the 110 samples taken during the year are given in his report.

## INFECTIOUS AND OTHER DISEASES.

### *Smallpox.*

No cases of Smallpox were notified during the year.

### *Diphtheria.*

The number of cases of Diphtheria notified (exclusive of Institutional cases) was 13, compared with 12 in 1942.

One case was notified from an Institution.

An Immunisation Clinic is held weekly at the M. & C. W. Clinic, and in addition there is a scheme for immunisation by the medical practitioners in the district.

During the year 1,386 children were immunised.

Approximately 63.25 per cent. of the children under 15 years in the Borough are now immunised.

Propaganda work by circulars to parents and posters has been carried out throughout the year.

### *Scarlet Fever.*

The number of cases of Scarlet Fever notified (exclusive of Institutional cases) was 84, as compared with 50 in 1942.

There were also 2 cases notified from Institutions.

### *Whooping Cough.*

The number of cases notified during the year was 22.

A scheme for immunisation against Whooping Cough was commenced in May, 1943, and up to the end of the year, 261 children had been immunised.

### *Measles.*

During the year 168 cases (excluding German Measles) were notified.

### *Enteric Fever.*

No cases of Enteric Fever were notified during the year, apart from Institutional cases.

### *Food Poisoning.*

No cases of Food Poisoning were notified during the year.

## ***Tuberculosis.***

	Pulmonary.		Non-Pulmonary.		Total.
	Male.	Female.	Male.	Female.	
Number of cases notified ... ..	27	29	7	4	67
Number of deaths ... ..	18	8	—	1	27

The following is a summary of cases on the Tuberculosis Register at the end of the year:

	Pulmonary.		Non-Pulmonary.		Total.
	Male.	Female.	Male.	Female.	
Number on Register at commencement of year	148	78	24	37	287
Number on Register at end of year ... ..	157	95	29	39	320

## ***Scabies and Body Vermin.***

In July, 1943, a Cleansing Centre was fitted and established at the Gas Cleansing Station, King Edward Avenue. The work is carried out by the British Red Cross Society's personnel. Cases are referred to the Department by the Medical Practitioners and the Education Authorities. I am glad to be able to report that the treatment has been beneficial. Up to the end of the year 327 persons had been treated.

The Health Visitors and the staff of the Day Nurseries keep observations with regard to head lice and general cleanliness and provision is made for treatment.

Propaganda by posters, etc., with regard to scabies and general cleanliness has been carried out during the year. A special film relating to Scabies was also shown.

## **MATERNITY AND CHILD WELFARE.**

### ***Particulars of Attendances at the Child Welfare Clinic.***

Number of new entrants during the year ... ..	364
Total number of children who attended during the year ...	956
Total attendance of mothers ... ..	6,097

### ***Ante-Natal Clinic.***

Total number of cases on Register during the year ... ..	218
Number of new cases ... ..	162
Number of clinics held ... ..	50
Total number of attendances ... ..	636
Average attendance per Clinic ... ..	12.72

### ***Birth Control Clinic.***

This Clinic was held monthly during the year. 80 new cases received advice and 182 attendances were made. Every care is taken to see that the objects of the Clinic are fulfilled.

## **Maternity Home.**

A scheme is in force whereby expectant mothers can be admitted to either the County Hospital or the Livingstone Hospital for their confinements. Financial assistance is given according to the income of the applicants.

11 cases were admitted under the scheme during the year.

## **Puerperal Pyrexia.**

14 cases of Puerperal Pyrexia were notified during the year. Ten occurred at the County Hospital and four where the confinement took place at the patient's own house. One of the latter was admitted to Bow Arrow Hospital.

## **Other Services.**

In connection with the ancillary services of the Maternity and Child Welfare Clinics, 4 children received orthopædic treatment, and 3 mothers and 1 child dental treatment during the year.

## **MILK (MOTHERS AND CHILDREN) ORDERS, 1919 and 1921.**

During the year 1943 the amount of milk supplied under these Orders was as follows: —

412 lbs. dried milk free.
65 „ „ „ half-price.

The distribution of Liquid Milk free, or at a reduced price, is undertaken during the war by the Food Office.

## **INFANT LIFE PROTECTION.**

Miss B. Hoather, Health Visitor, carried out the duties of Infant Protection Officer during the year.

Number of visits paid to foster children during the year	...	146
Number of foster mothers on register at end of year	...	10
Number of foster children on register at end of year	...	13

During the year the Adoption of Children (Regulation) Act, 1939 came into operation.

Notice of adoption was received with regard to 5 children. The adoption of one of these children was completed during the year.

## HOME VISITATION.

### VISITS OF HEALTH VISITORS.

The following visits were paid by your Health Visitors during the year:—

Number of new-born infants visited	...	...	...	...	532
Number of visits to infants under one year	...	...	...	...	1,637
Number of children on register over one year	...	...	...	...	1,332
Number of visits to children over one year	...	...	...	...	3,512
Total visits made by Health Visitors during year	...	...	...	...	5,681

In addition to these visits the following have been paid:—

Ante-natal visits	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	88
Death enquiries	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	4

## DAY NURSERIES.

Day Nurseries have been established at 21, West Hill and Oakfield Lane. The latter was opened in April, 1943.

The attendances fluctuate very much. At times the consideration of the question of providing a further nursery seems justified, but at other times the provision provided is quite adequate.

Among the various additional duties carried out by the Public Health Department during the war are the issue of babies' anti-gas helmets and the exchange of helmets for Mickey Mouse respirators on the children reaching the age of eighteen months.

I am, Sir, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

THOMAS FARTHING,

*Medical Officer of Health.*

## ANNUAL REPORT OF SANITARY INSPECTOR.

SIR, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I beg to report as follows on some of the most important matters relating to the Sanitary Inspection, etc., of the Borough for the year 1943.

### General.

Number of complaints investigated	...	...	...	...	412
Number of cases of infectious disease investigated	...	...	...	...	103
Number of premises disinfected: Infectious disease	...	...	...	...	102
Vermin	...	...	...	...	30
Bedding disinfected	...	...	...	36 sets (349 articles)	
Number of Notices served: Preliminary	...	...	...	...	216
Statutory	...	...	...	...	4
Number of drains tested: Water 53, Smoke 16	...	...	...	...	Total 69

### Supervision of Milk Supplies.

Samples of Milk taken under the Milk (Special Designations) Orders:—

6 Pasteurized. All complied with the Regulations.



52 samples of milk taken by the Kent Education Authorities in connection with the milk supply to Schools in the district. All complied with the standard.

One sample of mixed milk was taken from a local herd, under the Tuberculosis Order, 1938, and found to be negative.

## FOOD AND DRUG SAMPLING.

During the year 110 samples were obtained (76 formal and 34 informal) and were submitted to the Public Analyst. The following table shows the results of the analysis of these samples:—

				Formal.	Informal.	Genuine.	Not Genuine.	Remarks.		
Milk	...	...	...	36	1	37	—	All	were certified	as of
								"good quality."		
Arrowroot	...	...	...	—	1	1	—			
Blanc-mange Powder	...	...	...	1	—	1	—			
Butter	...	...	...	4	—	4	—			
Celery Salt	...	...	...	—	1	1	—			
Cocoa	...	...	...	1	1	2	—			
Coffee	...	...	...	4	—	4	—			
Condensed Milk	...	...	...	—	3	3	—			
Cornflour	...	...	...	1	—	1	—			
Curry Powder	...	...	...	1	—	1	—			
Drugs	...	...	...	2	10	12	—			
Dried Fruit	...	...	...	1	—	1	—			
Fish Paste	...	...	...	—	1	1	—			
Flour	...	...	...	1	—	1	—			
Gelantine	...	...	...	—	1	1	—			
Ginger Wine	...	...	...	—	1	1	—			
Gravy Salt	...	...	...	—	1	1	—			
Ground Ginger	...	...	...	2	—	2	—			
Jam	...	...	...	1	1	1	1	Slight fermentation. Warning given, stocks withdrawn.		
Lard	...	...	...	4	—	4	—			
Lemonade Powder	...	...	...	1	1	2	—			
Malted Chocolate Drink	...	...	...	—	1	1	—			
Margarine	...	...	...	3	—	3	—			
Meat Paste	...	...	...	1	—	1	—			
Mustard	...	...	...	1	—	1	—			
Onion Flavouring	...	...	...	—	1	1	—			
Parsley & Thyme Stuffing	...	...	...	—	1	1	—			
Pea Flour	...	...	...	—	1	1	—			
Pepper	...	...	...	1	—	1	—			
Pimento	...	...	...	—	1	1	—			
Pudding and Cake mixture	...	...	...	2	2	4	—			
Raising Powder	...	...	...	—	1	1	—			
Rice	...	...	...	1	—	1	—			
Sauce Powder	...	...	...	—	1	1	—			
Sausages & Sausage Meat	...	...	...	2	—	1	1	Sample contained sulphur dioxide and no preservative, notice was exhibited. Official warning given.		
Tea	...	...	...	1	—	1	—			
Tinned Fruit	...	...	...	—	1	1	—			
Vanilla Essence	...	...	...	—	1	1	—			
Vinegar	...	...	...	3	—	3	—			
Whisky	...	...	...	1	—	1	—			
				76	34	108	2			

## UNSOUND FOOD.

The total quantity of unsound food destroyed or salvaged during the year was 2 tons 17 cwt. 14 lb., as follows: —

Beef: 6cwt. 3qrs. 11lbs. (including one tubercular carcase and offal).  
Veal: 22lbs.  
Pork: 2qrs. 27lbs.  
Rabbits: 2qrs. 4lbs.  
Bacon: 3cwt. 22lbs.  
Fish: 24cwts. 1qr. 7lbs.  
Tinned Goods: 19cwt. 2qrs. 16lbs. (consisting of: meat 385 tins, fish 236 tins, fruit 140 tins, vegetables 185 tins, milk 727 tins, jam 71 tins).  
Cheese: 1cwt. 6lbs.  
Oatmeal: 1qr. 22lbs.  
Peas: 2qrs. 4lbs.  
Jam: 1qr. 16lbs.  
Prunes: 25lbs.  
Other Foods: 1cwt. 1qr.

## RAT CAMPAIGN.

In accordance with a direction by the Ministry of Food, a survey of the district was made to ascertain the extent of the rat infestation in the Borough.

During the month of October a propaganda drive was conducted by posters, displays in the windows of the Electricity and Gas Company Showrooms, and newspaper advertisements.

40 reports of rats were received and investigated and followed up by action with regard thereto.

## LEGAL PROCEEDINGS.

No legal proceedings were taken during the year.

I am, Sir, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

WALTER E. BALCHIN,

*Chief Sanitary Inspector.*